

8 October 1968

Logistic Developments in the Panhandle of North Vietnam, 30 September  
- 6 October, 1968

Activities South of the 19th Parallel

Armed Reconnaissance Sorties

This Week (30 Sep - 6 October) \*

412 sorties per day

51 percent in Route Package I

36 percent in Route Package II

13 percent in Route Package III  
(below 19° North)

Last Week (23-29 September)

349 sorties per day

53 percent in Route Package I

37 percent in Route Package II

10 percent in Route Package III  
(below 19° North)

For the Period 1 Apr - 6 Oct

360 sorties per day

57 percent in Route Package I

28 percent in Route Package II

15 percent in Route Package III\*\*  
(below 19° North)

For the Period 1 Jan - 6 Oct

283 sorties per day

60 percent in Route Package I

25 percent in Route Package II

15 percent in Route Package III

Weather\*\*\*

Above 19° N - Generally good weather covered the areas above the 19th

\* The rate of attack listed for 30 September - 6 October may be as much as five percent below the actual rate because some reports from operating units in Southeast Asia were not available at the time of publication.

\*\* Beginning 1 April nearly all sorties have been flown south of the 19th Parallel.

\*\*\* Good weather - 10,000 feet or more ceiling, and five miles or more visibility.

Fair weather - 5-10 thousand feet ceiling, and five miles or more visibility.

Poor weather - Less than 5,000 feet ceiling, and/or five miles or less visibility.

Parallel during the past week.

Below 19° N - Poor weather persisted over the southern Panhandle during the first four days of the week, but generally good weather, especially along the coastal portions, prevailed during the balance of the week.

Highways

	<u>Preliminary Sightings</u>	<u>Pilot Reports on Trucks*</u>	<u>Destroyed</u>	<u>Damaged</u>
This Week (30 Sep-6 Oct)	338	110	37	
Last Week (23-29 Sep)	253	62	25	
Weekly Average (since 1 Apr 68)	641	118	73	
Weekly Average (since 1 Jan 68)	522	91	64	

Remarks:

Improved weather conditions in the latter part of the week aided air operations and probably accounted for the more than 30 percent increase in truck sightings and 70 percent increase in the number of vehicles reported destroyed or damaged compared with the previous week (see table above). The number of truck sightings, this week, as well as those of the past several weeks, however, remain well below the weekly average since 1 April (about 50 percent lower this past week). This apparent drop in recent truck activity can be partly associated with the generally poor weather blanketing most of the North Vietnamese

\* These are preliminary data, included to show trends in activity. Final data on trucks sighted, destroyed and damaged may be appreciably greater, as the above compilations are based on incomplete reporting.

Panhandle and severely handicapping attack and reconnaissance missions. The many reports of "moving targets" and "movers" detected by pilots during night operations (which are not reflected in statistical records) indicate that vehicular movements in the areas under attack are much greater than the totals shown.

Sightings of trucks this week were widespread with no large concentrations or convoys noted. Truck movements along coastal Route 1A south of the Vinh area again were much greater than those of the past several months.

Roadwatch Teams

	Total Trucks Counted for Period		
	Latest Period	Previous Period	Weekly Average (based on number of days of obser- vation) 1968
Route 15*	(30 Sep - 4 Oct) 73S; 65N	( 1- 5 Sep) 30S; 37N	147S; 154N
Route 912**	(28 Sep -30 Sep) 10S; 21N	(20-24 Sep) 22S; 10N	42S; 35N***

Railroads

Preliminary Pilot Reports on Railroad Cars			
	<u>Sighted</u>	<u>Destroyed</u>	<u>Damaged</u>
This Week (30 Sep-6 Oct)	17	2	2
Last Week (23-29 Sep)	0	0	0
Weekly Average (since 1 Apr 68)	13	1	2
Weekly Average (since 1 Jan 68)	25	2	5

Remarks:

All of the railroad cars sighted by pilots during the past week were observed on the tramway south of Vinh by Forward Air Controllers (FAC's). Evidence of rail activity south of Bai Duc Thon was noted by the FAC's, who reported that truck locomotives and tram cars had moved from place to place during the week. One FAC reported that the rail segment south of Bai Duc Thon contained numerous camouflaged storage buildings along the line.

Attacks against key chokepoints on the rail segments south of the 19th Parallel continued, particularly the rail bridges at Dien Chau and Tam Da. Pilots reported that these bridges were either destroyed or damaged, but photography showed that the North Vietnamese continued to allocate men and materials to repair them. Other coverage indicates that damage at other points along the line is often effectively repaired soon after inflicted.

A measure of the efficiency of these repair efforts was recorded in [redacted] Vinh. This coverage showed that a total of 38 serviceable rail cars not previously observed on the line

were at the Vinh railroad yard, the first indication since early June that key problem areas were eliminated, at least temporarily, and that through rail movement was possible south of the 19th Parallel.

Waterways

	<u>Preliminary Pilot Reports on Watercraft</u>	<u>Sighted</u>	<u>Destroyed</u>	<u>Damaged</u>
This Week (30 Sep-6 Oct)	686	170	151	
Last Week (23-29 Sep)	710	149	124	
Weekly Average (since 1 Apr 68)	473	78	87	
Weekly Average (since 1 Jan 68)	368	60	72	

Remarks:

The watercraft activity south of 19° N was again centered on the waterways around Vinh - The Song Ca, Kenh Gai, and the Song Ngan Sau. Photography north of the 19th Parallel showed heavy watercraft activity on the Song Dua. Two hundred and twenty-five watercraft were observed

on the 5-mile section of the Song Dua that runs from the coast to the Dong Ben transshipment point. Dong Ben is about one mile south of Cho Giat -- the large rail-to-road transshipment point -- and is near Route 1A, the main north-south highway route. The Song Dua was

last observed on [redacted] when 87 watercraft were noted. The Kenh Me, which connects the Song Dua with the waterway system south of the 19th Parallel, was also active and showed an increase in activity over

photography [redacted]

Logistic Activity Between the 19th and 20th Parallels

The North Vietnamese have increased their rail transport capability

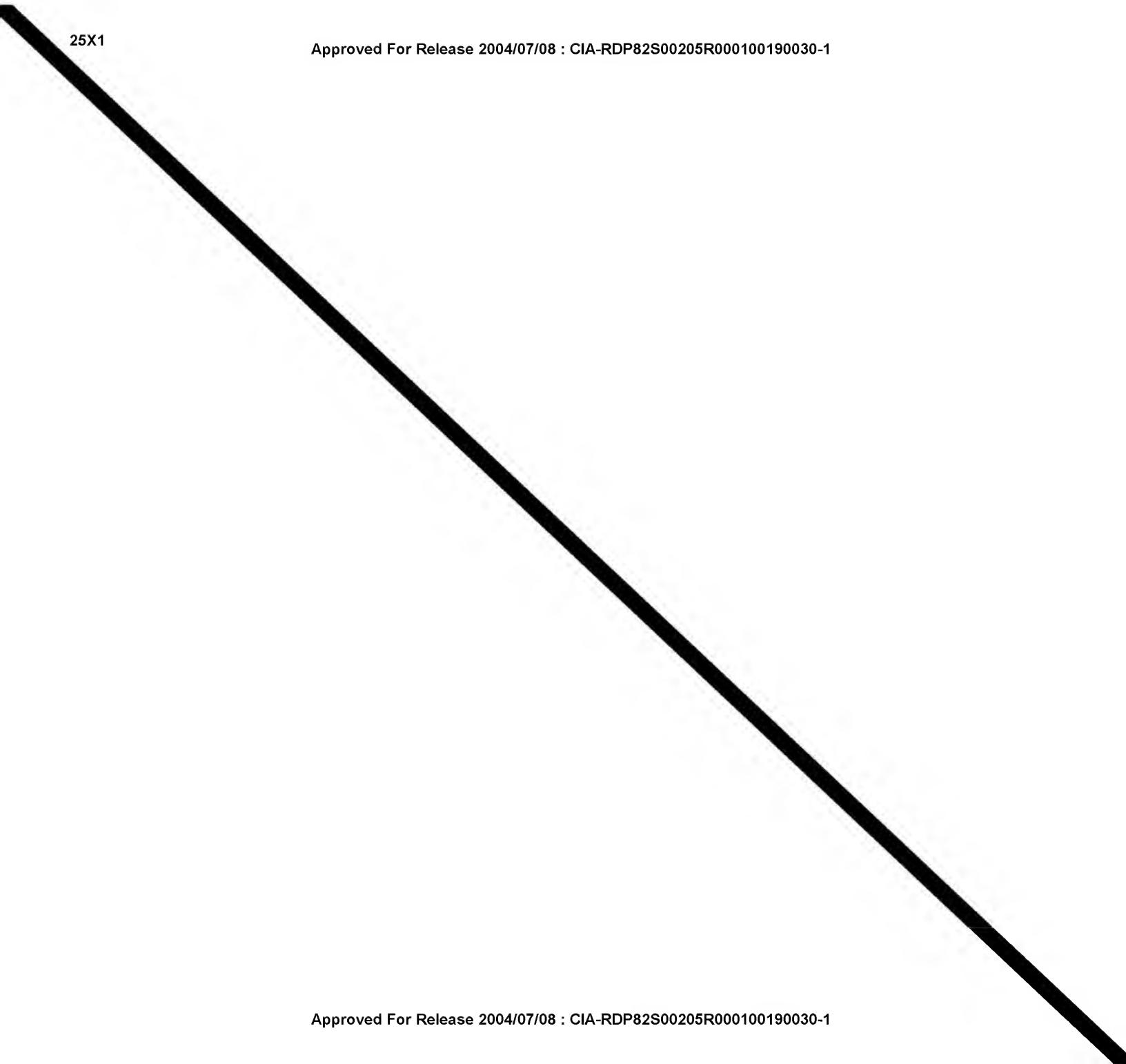
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between the 19th and 20th Parallels. Large meter-gauge box cars were observed at the Cho Giat/Tho Trang rail transshipment area, indicating that the North Vietnamese have reconstructed bridges on the rail line south of Thanh Hoa to such an extent that normal rail operations are again possible between the 19th and 20th Parallels. Prior to mid-September, the line south of Thanh Hoa was operable only by small meter-gauge tram cars because of the weight bearing limits of reconstructed bridges.

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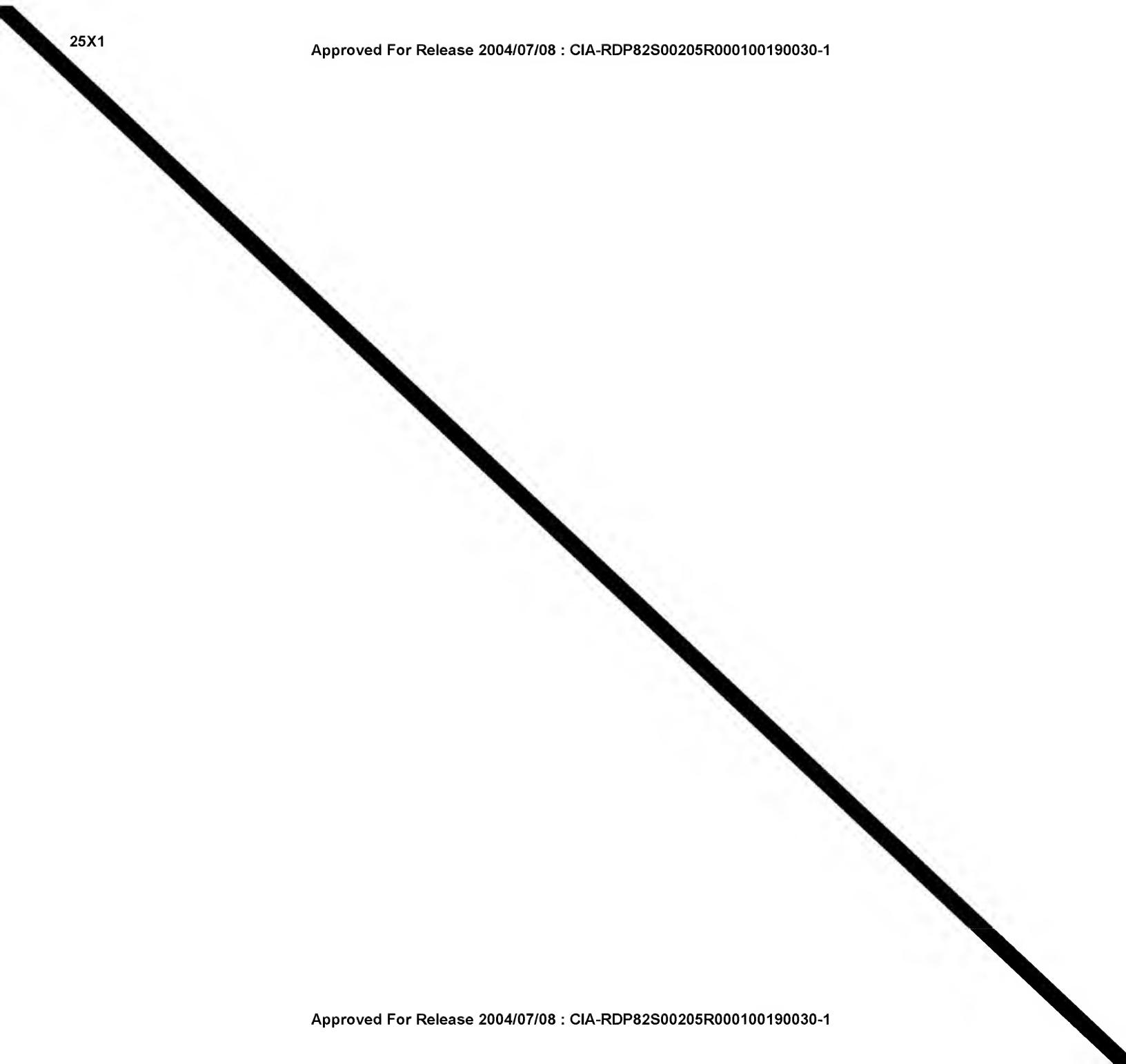
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